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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON UN ACTIVITIES IN IRAQ; UN REQUESTS U.S.
MILAD

¶1. (SBU) Summary: USUN and UKUN met April 3 with the UN,s Iraq team to discuss substantive and logistical issues involving the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI). The UN pressed for USG approval to assign a U.S. military advisor to the UNAMI team; the UN is actively looking to expand its presence throughout Iraq, and claim the expansion requires additional milads, especially from the U.S. or other coalition country. On elections, the UN is optimistic that elections can be held in 2008, and expects that a 30-day voter registration drive will begin June 1. On Article 140, the UN reported that it was working with four districts in the north to gauge the willingness of all sides to compromise, before tackling Kirkuk. In this regard, UNAMI considers its relations with the KRG to be "excellent." End summary.

UN PUSHES FOR A U.S. MILAD

¶2. (SBU) The UN,s team leader on Iraq, Darko Mocibob, as well as visiting UNAMI chief of staff Siddharth Chatterjee, raised the UN,s request for six additional military advisors in a meeting with USUN and UKUN April 3. They reported they had received positive indications from Italy, and are engaged in serious discussions with others, including Australia, Canada and Japan. These additional milads are needed, said Mocibob and Chatterjee, if UNAMI is to expand beyond Baghdad, Irbil and Basrah. The UN hopes to have a future presence in Najaf, Anbar, Kirkuk, Dahuk, and Sulaminiyah, but cannot begin without the milads, which serve as a liaison to MNF-I and the Iraqi military, a role that is a precondition for a UN presence. Both emphasized the importance of a U.S. milad, preferably with experience in theater, to serve as the point person for UNAMI,s dealings with MNF-I. They noted that the U.S. has never seconded a milad to UNAMI, despite previous requests. Poloff promised to report this request, but encouraged UNAMI to discuss this issue with MNF-I in Baghdad to see if an informal arrangement could be reached.

LONG-TERM COMPOUND UPDATE

¶3. (SBU) Mocibob said progress was slow but steady on the long-term compound. UN management in New York has asked for clarification on a number of issues, and UNAMI is working to respond to these questions. The two major outstanding issues involve pending requests before the Iraqi government: a request to grant the UN a lien in writing for 25 years rent of the compound site, and a request for more details regarding the Iraqi government,s promise to defray a percentage of the costs of the compound, currently budgeted at 98.2 million dollars. Chatterjee asked that the U.S. and UK raise these two issues with the Iraqis. SRS de Mistura plans to address the UN,s budget committee at the beginning of May, and needs a response from the Iraqis on these two issues before that meeting.

ARTICLE 140 AND ELECTIONS

4. (SBU) Mocibob said UNAMI has begun work in four districts along the disputed boundary in the north, before tackling Kirkuk. Chatterjee described UNAMI relations with the KRG as "excellent," and emphasized that any long-term solution to Article 140 and Kirkuk will require passage of the long-delayed oil revenue law. On elections, the UN is proud of its role in arranging the recent selection of governorate election officers, and is now optimistic regarding the prospects for holding an election in 2008. The Council of Representatives has begun the process of allocating 100 million USD to begin the election preparations, which starts with a 30-day voter registration period, currently set for June 1.

KHALILZAD